

**Submitted by:**

The General Convention Deputation of the Diocese of Florida

**Resolution Title:**

Including youth representation on Vestries and Mission Boards of the Diocese of Florida.

**Submission of Resolution:**

**Whereas**, the youth of our church are deeply concerned with the well-being and future of the Episcopal Church, and their active participation is essential for the church's growth and sustainability;

**Whereas**, the youth desire to have their voices heard at the councils of the church, ensuring that their perspectives and ideas are considered in decision-making processes;

**Whereas**, the youth can bring a fresh and different perspective to the vestries and mission boards of our diocese, contributing innovative ideas and approaches that can benefit the church community as a whole;

**Whereas**, adult communicants, as defined in the Canons of the Episcopal Church<sup>1</sup>, are aged 16 and older and are expected to be confirmed;

**Be it resolved**, that the parishes and missions of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida be encouraged to amend their by-laws to actively include youth representatives, aged 16-17, on vestries and mission boards with seat and voice, recognizing their valuable contributions and ensuring their voices are heard in all aspects of church governance and mission work.

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**Explanation:**

As a member of the Official Youth Presence (OYP) to the 2024 General Convention of the Episcopal Church, Evan Van Brunt, a member of our diocese, was moved by the power of the legislative process of our Church and the ability of the OYP to share their thoughts and opinions as the House of Deputies deliberated on various resolutions and matters before the House. During legislative sessions and committee hearings, members of the General Convention, as well as visitors and guests, listened intently to the words of the OYP who shared heartfelt concerns and opinions regarding the matters being considered. As part of the Convention, the OYP was asked to present to the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops. Evan was one of a few that spoke to the House of Deputies regarding their place in the life of the Episcopal Church and felt called to bring voice to the youth of our diocese at our Diocesan Convention and on our vestries and mission boards.

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<sup>1</sup> Title I, Canon 17, section 1(b) and (c)